

Week Three: Old World Government and Satire

Weekly Focus: Analysis

Weekly Skill: Analyzing events and ideas

Lesson Summary: This week students will explore early forms of government and then compare and contrast them. They will also be asked to think critically about political satire and its relationship to this unit's essential question, "Why do we tell stories?"

Materials Needed: Projector, Computers and Internet Access for research (printed articles on monarchy, tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy may be substituted), Handout, Group roles, Obama video

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- Read and comprehend an article about historical government
- Demonstrate comprehension by correctly answering questions and presenting their answers to the class
- Graphically organize various governments forms in a comparison chart
- Apply information from one article to a new situation
- Define Satire
- Practice writing a short answer response

Common Core Standards Addressed: RH.11-12.2., RH.11-12.3., RH.11-12.7, RH.11-12.9

Notes: This week we will be focusing on the Analysis portion of the C.A.R.E. model. Students will be asked to look critically at an issue and to work on categorizing, comparing, and contrasting information. Most of these activities will be focused on activities that can be categorized at a Depth of Knowledge level of 2 or higher. Remind students that they will be working on analysis skills and activities throughout the class.

Because this week we are focusing on Analysis and not Responding with Evidence, the Short Answer segment is meant as an introduction to writing a response with evidence. Students are not meant to master this skill in this lesson. Next week, we will spend more time exploring *how* to write a response using evidence from the text.

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Activities:

Warm-Up: Types of Government

Time: 10 minutes

As students come in, ask them to spend the first few minutes of class writing down as many types of government as they know and then describing them. Then, explain that today we will be looking at four early forms of government, most of which still exist today.

Activity 1: Critical Reading and Research

Time: 60 minutes

- 1) Divide students into groups of 4. Hand out Group role sheet and have each student choose a role.
- 2) Hand out today's reading. In groups, have students answer questions one through four.

Break: 10 minutes

- 3) After break, have students reconvene to share their research/information. Be sure to have students fill in information presented about the various government groups on their own charts. You may find it useful to create a large government chart on the whiteboard. If this is the case, have the recorder from each group fill in the information there.

Activity 2: Stories and Politics, Writing

Time: 40 minutes

- 1) Remind students of this unit's essential question, "Why do we tell stories?" Ask them how they think telling stories might have anything to do with politics?
- 2) Next, have a student look up the word "satire." Read the definition together as a class. Explain to students that one way in which storytelling is used in politics is through political satire. On the GED test, students will often see satire in the form of a political cartoon.
- 3) Show students the Obama satire video as an introduction to satire. Together as a class, work to answer these three questions: a) What is happening in the video (*who* is it discussing, *what* events are occurring, etc.)? b) What is the *tone* of the video? Is it serious, playful? c) What words are repeated "Again and Again" in the video? d) What is the *message* of the video? Explain that in satire, although the content is usually funny, the message is usually serious. In this instance, the video is making fun of the idea that one man can perform superhuman feats. In other words, Obama is not a superhero and expectations of him are unrealistic.
- 4) Have students read the Greek satire handout and write one paragraph as a response, **trying to use evidence from the article excerpts to support their response**. Give students ten minutes to write a paragraph and then share. *You may find it useful to write a sample response to share with students.*

Extra Work/Homework:

Time:

Have students find an example of political satire and write a one paragraph report on it.

Differentiated Instruction/ELL Accommodation Suggestions

Have beginning students simply highlight the quotes in the article that answer the question.

Activity

Short Answer Response

Online Resources:

- 1) [PBS Article on Satire](#)

Suggested Teacher Readings: [Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching Writing](#)

ACTIVITY #1: GROUP QUESTIONS

Directions: Read through the article below and then answer the questions that follow.

TYPES OF ANCIENT GOVERNMENT

(Taken from: *Ancient History* <http://suite101.com/article/forms-of-government-in-ancient-greek-city-states-a84980>)

The emergence of political systems during the Archaic period led to a variety of different forms of governance among the many city states in Ancient Greece.

Ancient Greek systems of government took many forms during the *Archaic* period, 750-500 BCE. Because the Greek city-states were self-governing entities and not bound together by any type of central control or an empire, as in other ancient civilizations, various different governing formats developed independently and allowed for experimentation and change. Some scholars maintain that the variance of governing systems may have eventually led to Greek domination by outside forces, beginning with Philip of Macedonia's conquests following the Peloponnesian War.

TYPES OF ANCIENT GREEK GOVERNMENT

The rise of *tyrannies* may have begun in Argos. The negative connotation associated with the *tyrannos* (tyrant) was not initially apparent. Tyrants may have evolved out of an earlier form of one-man rule known as the *basileus*, which also bore religious connotations. Pheidon of Argos transitioned from this position to that of tyrant in order to thwart attempts by the aristocrats in forming an oligarchy. [1] Athens, associated with *democracy*, attempted rule by tyranny in 632, the most notorious known as Draco.

Democracy refers to the power (*kratos*) of the people (*demos*). In Athens, however, only 10% of the people were considered citizens and able to participate fully in the political structure. Participation was based on land ownership (property) which opened up the democratic form to charges of elitism. As a result of Solon's reforms, the Ekklesia or Assembly was open to all adult male citizens. Athenian democracy, unlike today, was direct democracy.

Some city-states favored *monarchy*. Sparta actually had two kings that acted as a check against each other (perhaps like the system of Consuls in the Roman Senate). Sparta also featured a people's Assembly, the *Appella* or *Demos*, which met once a month. Participation was limited to male citizens thirty years of age and older. The Appella voiced, quite literally, the judgment of the people. In today's court systems, the Appeals Courts, at least in name, may be traced to this term.

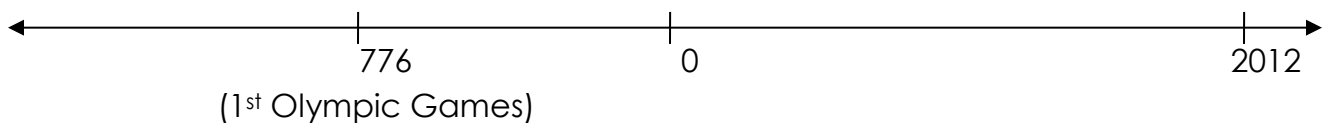
Oligarchies represented another form of government. In these city-states, governance rested with an elite group of men, an aristocratic committee of wealthy community leaders that facilitated daily government. The term refers to rule by the "few" (*oligoi*). Their members considered themselves the "best men," a term from which "aristocrat" is derived. Government functions were divided, in terms of individual responsibilities.

Democracy	Tyranny	Oligarchy	Monarchy

1) Put these phrases about government in their correct boxes above:

- Rule by one, often with negative connotations
- Rule by a king or queen
- Refers to power of the people, and is a rule where leaders are elected by vote
- Rule by an elite group of individuals

2) Include the dates from the article above on the timeline below



3) Choose one of the types of government above. Using either materials from your instructor or the internet, look up the type of government you've chosen. Find:

- one new fact about this kind of government that the article above didn't tell you
- an example of a country that has or has had this kind of government in the past.

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4) Current Greek Government

Directions: Read the news excerpt below concerning a current issue happening in modern day Greece. Then answer the question below:

News Excerpt: Greek Debt Crisis 8/13/12

By Stelios Bouras and Philip Pangalo taken from

<http://stream.wsj.com/story/european-elections-may-2012/SS-2-10986/SS-2-45642/>

Greece's economy remained deep in recession in the second quarter of the year, contracting by 6.2% on an annual basis, making it more difficult for the coalition government to introduce the next batch of austerity measures and to meet fiscal targets demanded by international creditors.

The second quarter downturn came after two successive national elections in May and June weighed on business activity, in economic weakness that is expected to continue in the next few months after a weak start to the tourism season and further tax measures as part of previously adopted cuts.

Based on the information above along with information from the first article, Modern day Greece most likely has what kind of government?

- a) Monarchy
- b) Tyranny
- c) Democracy

ACTIVITY #2: INDIVIDUAL WRITING

Directions: Read the article below and then write a *one paragraph response* to the question that follows it. Try to use **at least one quote** from the article below in your answer.

How Old is Political Satire?

(Excerpt taken from Research Penn State <http://www.rps.psu.edu/probing/satire.html>)

During the 2004 election season, an animated streaming video featuring Senator John Kerry and President George Bush trading insults to the tune of ***This Land Is Your Land*** was seen by millions of people over the Internet—and was even viewed by astronauts on the International Space Station. The video was produced by a company called JibJab, which specializes in animated comedy set to patriotic songs, all poking fun at politicians.

JibJab, quite simply, is political satire for the wired 21st century.

Political satire has been around as long as politics and government. Part entertainment, part statement of beliefs, it always magnifies the wrongs (or perceived wrongs) of government and is found in all manner of media across centuries, from Jonathan Swift's ***Gulliver's Travels*** to Jon Stewart's ***The Daily Show***.

Although it usually intends to be funny, satire's main purpose is to launch an attack using the weapon of wit, says Robert Speel. "Political satire is using sarcasm and/or humor to point out the foibles, incompetence, or corruption of political leaders and government actions," explains the associate professor of political science at Penn State Erie. "Social satire, while often related to political satire, pokes fun at society, daily life, or certain classes of people rather than directly at political leaders and government."

So how old is political satire? At least 2,400 years old, says Speel. The ancient Greek dramatist Aristophanes, sometimes called the father of comedy, satirized Athenian leaders and their conduct of the Peloponnesian War.

Political satire probably arrived in the United States on the Mayflower, but as the colonies struggled for independence, satire became a form of commentary on British rule.

"Benjamin Franklin was a prolific political satirist, in works such as ***Rules by Which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One***, written in 1773," Speel says.

Political cartoons—which became increasingly popular in the 19th century, a time when many Americans were illiterate—remain a popular form of political satire today. The cartoons also helped shape modern-day politics. Explains Speel, "The cartoonist Thomas Nast became famous in the second half of the nineteenth century for his political cartoons in ***Harper's Weekly*** magazine, in which he created the symbols of the elephant for Republicans and the donkey for Democrats."

Short Answer Question

What is political satire and what is its connection to Ancient Greece?

Notes/Quote(s) I want to use to support my answer from the text:

(Write your final paragraph in this box).

Group Work Roles

LEADER

- Makes sure that every voice is heard
- Focuses work around the learning task; guide group from exercise to exercise

Sound bites: Let's hear from ____ next." "That's interesting, but let's get back to our task."

RECORDER

- Compiles group members' ideas:
 - Make a star on the sections/numbers we need to go over
 - Write specific questions

Sound bites: "I think I heard you say _____; is that right?" "How would you like me to write this?"

TIME KEEPER

- Encourages the group to stay on task
- Announces when time is halfway through and when time is nearly up

Sound bite: "We only have five minutes left. Let's see if we can wrap up by then."

PRESENTER

- Presents the group's finished work to the class

Sound bite: "Which questions do we need to go over in this section?" "What else do we need to ask?"

Created by Jen Ouellette for the Minnesota Literacy Council